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Tina Marie Kush

Hamline University, tkush01@hamline.edu

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A NEEDS ANALYSIS OF INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCY SKILLS FOR THE
COMMUNITY INTERPRETER PREPARATORY TRAINING COURSE

by

Tina M. Kush

A capstone submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of Masters of Arts in English as a Second Language.

Hamline University

Saint Paul, Minnesota

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Primary Advisor: Julia Reimer
Secondary Advisor: Anne DeMuth
Peer Reviewer: Rose Steller

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Dedicated to my students.

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Thank you.

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Since I began teaching English as a second language to adults more than 13 years ago, I have often heard students talk about working as language interpreters. This is not surprising; in the process of becoming new Americans, these students have experiences of not understanding important information and feel the desire to help others. Also, they have the longing to earn a living wage.

Last year Veronica¹ arrived as a new student to my English as a second language (ESL) for healthcare workers class, and shared that she had been working as an interpreter the last few months. Veronica's native language is Spanish; she was born in Honduras, and at that time, had lived in the US for five years. She said that she returned to school to improve her English, and to save \$600 to take a newly required training course before she could go back to work as a community interpreter. Considering her skills in reading and pronunciation when she arrived in my class, I wondered how effectively she was able to work as an interpreter since her spoken English was difficult to understand, and her reading tested at about a sixth grade level. However, while living in Honduras, she graduated high school and attended a two-year university program that focused on business, so she had a solid educational background in her first language.

Veronica said that when she was working as an interpreter, she usually assisted clients at medical appointments. She shared that she was paid about \$20 an hour for her

¹ The name Veronica is a pseudonym. All participants will be identified by pseudonyms.

part-time contract position, and said it was the best-paid job she has had in this country. Over the school year Veronica worked hard; she greatly improved her pronunciation and raised her reading to about an eighth grade level.

In the meantime, I investigated how to create a pathway for Veronica to return to interpreting work, and for other students to enter the career of community interpreter. In my ESL for healthcare workers class, the interest in the career of interpreting was mounting, so my students and I agreed that I would contact the manager of an interpreting agency and invite her to be a guest speaker in our class. From our guest speaker, we learned that the need for language interpreters in our area is very great and that the job of community interpreting could be an attainable goal for many of our advanced adult English learners (ELs). At the same time, I knew that if my students were going to invest and enroll in a community interpreter training course, I wanted them to be prepared to succeed. My investigation led me to a conversation with a community interpreter trainer, and I learned that one of the most difficult parts of the 40-hour training course for her students has been understanding and developing the cultural competency skills that are needed to succeed in the training course and on the job. Authors of an interpreter training manual, Bancroft and Rubio-Fitzpatrick (2011), note that, "Culture is perhaps the most complex area of the community interpreter's work" (p. 194).

The purpose of this study is to investigate the intercultural competency skills students will need to develop during the 40-hour community interpreter training course. It is my hope that this research will help me design an English for specific purpose (ESP)

course focused on preparing adult ELs to succeed in the 40-hour community interpreter training course.

This chapter introduces preliminary information associated with adult ELs being prepared to enter interpreter training. I explain my role and motivation in the study as well as my background. Finally, I state the research question that guides my study.

The Community Interpreter and Intercultural Competence

According to Bancroft and Rubio-Fitzpatrick (2011), interpreting is the process of understanding and analyzing a spoken message and re-expressing that message accurately and objectively in another language while considering the cultural and social context. Community interpreters are professionals that enable access to community services for clients who do not speak the language of the service providers. Their job includes interpreting for basic healthcare services, at K-12 educational meetings, and for human and social service providers as well as many other community services. Community interpreting involves much personal interaction with the client, and it also requires knowledge of the clients' and providers' cultural backgrounds. Community interpreters, more than any other kind of interpreter, need to act as a cultural bridge between service providers and clients. Therefore, this group of interpreters needs to know the cultural aspects of interpreting and must be interculturally competent (Bancroft & Rubio-Fitzpatrick, 2011; National Standard Guide for Community Interpreting Services, 2007).

As reported in Minnesota State Colleges and Universities' 2015 career Internet website (2015), there are a variety of pathways of education for different types of interpreter careers. Although there are many interpreter roles, the requirements of the

community interpreter job usually include a high school diploma, a language assessment typically done by the hiring agency, and a certificate earned for attending the 40-hour community interpreter training course. Additionally, the web site reports that most jobs in this sector of the occupation with this level of training are contract part-time jobs and pay about \$20 an hour. There are also more extensive training programs for interpreters offered at community colleges and universities, ranging from two to three years in length or longer. This more in-depth type of training could lead to full-time interpreting positions in specialized medical fields or courts of law (Minnesota State Colleges and Universities, 2015). According to Minnesota's career, education and job resource (2015) the outlook is very good for interpreters' employment with national job growth from expected to be 31.4 %. At the time of writing this paper, most of our school's advanced adult ELs who showed interest in an interpreter career and desired to be employed had jobs. My adult EL students' income typically averages about minimum wage, eight dollars an hour, for working as a store clerk or cashier, and ranges to about 11 dollars an hour for working as a nurse assistant. Some students are employed in food service or transportation jobs, and there they have the opportunity to make a higher income with tips. Compared to these more usual jobs, the career of community interpreter would offer a higher wage and opportunities for professional growth.

I have been a teacher of adult ESL for over 13 years. I have taught beginning to advanced level students, with most of my years spent at the advanced level. The adult ELs that attend the upper mid-west metropolitan Adult Basic Education (ABE) school where I teach come from countries around the world including Eritrea, the Ivory Coast,

Kazakhstan, Somalia, Ukraine, Mexico, Honduras, Iran, Russia, France, China, Romania and Croatia. They are a mixture of refugees, immigrants and a few sojourners. While teaching ESL for healthcare workers the last two years, I observed that the students' career interest in the medical field has increased, in particular in the medical interpreting career. This growing interest has led to my role as a researcher, gathering data from various stakeholders in the community interpreter field to facilitate the planning of an ESP course designed to prepare adult ELs to enter community interpreter training.

Guiding Question

Because of my experiences described above, I am very much interested in interpreter training, and how I can prepare my students, adult advanced level ELs, to enter the community interpreter profession. The 40-hour training course is an expensive investment, costing around \$600 to \$800 per student. As an adult ESL teacher aware that the topic of intercultural competence has been challenging for students enrolled in the 40-hour community interpreter training courses, I want to investigate how best to prepare my adult EL students to succeed in the required community interpreter so that they can work as interpreters.

My guiding research question is: In preparing a needs assessment for a 40-hour community interpreter training course,

- What intercultural competence skills do adult ELs need to develop?

- What gap exists between the intercultural competency beliefs, strategies and behaviors of perspective EL candidates and those needed to succeed in the interpreter training course?

Chapter Summary

In this chapter, I discussed my interest in the community interpreter career and its demand for cultural competency skills as well providing my motivation for the studying the topic. I explained my background as an adult ESL teacher. I introduced the context of my study in an upper mid-west metropolitan area, and my role in the study as the interviewer of experts in the community interpreting field and adult ELs. Chapter Two provides a review of relevant literature. The literature discusses culture, intercultural competence models and skills, course design for ESP courses and needs analysis. It concludes with the recognition that there is an absence of studies in the field of intercultural competency skills needed by ELs preparing to enter community interpreter training. The research design and methodology that will guide the study are described in Chapter Three. In Chapter Four, I will present the results of the study, and I explain the findings of the data and the conclusion of the study in Chapter Five. The chapter will also suggest some areas for further research.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

One of the most valuable skills we can have is cultural competence—the ability to work effectively across cultures in a way that acknowledges and respects the culture of the person or organization being served.

Jerome H. Hanley, 1999, a clinical child psychologist and professor at the University of South Carolina.

It is my hope that this research project will lead to developing an ESP course designed to prepare adult ELs to enter community interpreter training. An important aspect of developing this course is facilitating a needs assessment in the topic of intercultural competence. My guiding research question is: In preparing a needs assessment for a 40-hour community interpreter training course,

- What intercultural competence skills do adult ELs need to develop?
- What gap exists between the intercultural competency beliefs, strategies and behaviors of perspective EL candidates and those needed to succeed in the interpreter training course?

This chapter presents an overview of culture and intercultural competence, descriptions of the models of intercultural competence used in this study and an overview of ESP course design and needs analysis. Finally, the need for research in the area of intercultural competency skills ELs need to develop to be successful in a 40-hour community interpreter training course will be presented.

The Interpreter and Culture

Language interpreters of all kinds are responsible not only for the interpretation of words, but for the “interpretation” of culture, which is often equally important in positive outcomes for someone with English inadequate to the situation. The California Healthcare Interpreters Association (2002) identifies cultural clarifier as one of the four main roles of interpreters. The others include message converter, message clarifier, and patient advocate. Bancroft and Rubio-Fitzpatrick (2011) argue that community interpreters, more than any other kind of interpreter, need to act as a cultural bridge between service providers and clients. Interpreters need to be well versed in the customs, habits, values, and traditions of the two cultures that they are interpreting and mediating between. Thus, intercultural competence is especially important for interpreters who may be the client’s first and most important connection to the mainstream English-speaking community.

Culture

Culture is a complex and complicated concept that invites a variety of definitions. For the purpose of this project, culture is defined as a “set of distinctive spiritual, material, intellectual, and emotional features of society or a social group, and that it encompasses, in addition to art and literature, lifestyles, ways of living together, value systems, traditions and beliefs” (*Universal declaration on cultural diversity*, 2001, p. 1). In other words, culture is the ways of being, and a filter to understanding social groups.

Weaver (1986) uses the image of an iceberg to explain the many layers of culture. (See Appendix A) Like an iceberg, part of culture is above the water in that it is visible

and easy to identify and know. This part includes surface culture and elements of culture that are observable, such as the arts, folk dancing, dress, and cooking. Again like an iceberg, part of culture is below the water in that it is invisible and difficult to see and know. Designated as deep culture, the part below the surface includes elements such as approaches to problem solving, patterns of superior and subordinate relationships, work ethics, eye behavior, expression, and conversational patterns in various social context, approach to interpersonal relationships, and much more.

The elements of deep culture are the unspoken and unconscious rules that govern day-by-day details of life as it is lived. Kantan (2004) states that these below-the-surface parts of culture are the socially determined value judgments that actions and language may imply, but are not fully expressed in the meanings of a word. An example would be what are considered valid reasons for an individual to miss work. For instance a Latina woman misses a week of work to spend time with her sister who has a new baby. While the woman is culturally expected by her family to spend this time with her sister and the new baby, her job is at risk because this is not an acceptable reason to miss work at the American company where she is employed. According to Hall (1989), deep culture, also referred to as out-of-awareness culture, is the part that determines what we respond to emotionally and identify with. For example, the traits and behaviors that describe a person as a good spouse vary greatly from culture to culture.

There are some particular aspects of deep culture that interpreters especially need to be aware of and knowledgeable about to be successful. These include the communication styles of high and low context, the concept of time, and turn-taking as

well as the use of silence (Kantan, 2004). Hall (1989) describes a scale with low context at one end and high context at the other. While no culture is at either end, cultures tend to have more elements that are typical of one end or the other. This means that in communication between people in low-context situations the listener tends to know very little background about the spoken topic. The speaker talks in a linear style with cause and effect, providing much support and evidence in communication. Listeners like messages that are direct, explicit and dense with information. American culture is described as a low context culture. In contrast with high context cultures, the listener in a high context culture has much background information on the topic at hand; great importance is given to implied meanings with non-verbal communication such as body language, setting, and relationships. Chinese and Latin American cultures are examples of high context cultures that rely on listening and intuition (Hall, 1998). Kantan (2004) points out that working with people from cultures that are on opposite ends of the low-high scale is a complex task for the interpreter, adding that it is the interpreter's responsibility to shift from one end of the scale to the other to provide the amount of context that is appropriate for each party's understanding (Kantan, 2004).

The concept of time is another important cultural element for interpreters to be mindful of while working. Hall (1998) noted that low-context cultures view time as sequential, highly scheduled and not to be wasted. They schedule time in small increments such as minutes or hours, and reward punctuality and promptness. In contrast, high context cultures tend to be involved with many different people and relationships that demand attention, and they view time as being able to be manipulated or stretched.

Also, time can be ignored if it means being courteous, and kind to other people. Thus, the perception of time is a significant cultural factor for interpreters to consider as it may take some cultural mediating while in session, so it doesn't interfere with understanding (Hall, 1998).

Another aspect of deep culture that can be challenging for interpreters is the concepts of silence and turn-taking because they are both are very crucial in communication (Kantan, 2004). For example, Westerners generally understand moments of silence as a failure in communication while Asian cultures view silence as a form of respect, a time to process information. Lastly, Hall (1998) points out that turn-taking plays an important role in communication. Knowing when to start and stop during a discussion is important for communication. Each culture follows its own patterns, which could result in several situations such as two people taking turns and not interrupting each other while speaking, or people interrupting each other throughout the entire conversation (Hall, 1998). Culture-specific knowledge is important for interpreters because language and interpreting are culture bound: how languages convey meaning is strongly related to culture (Kantan, 2004).

Cultural Mediation

Because so much of a culture is hidden below the surface, and because languages are from cultures that are different from one another, interpreters who seek to bridge languages must also bridge cultures. Bancroft and Rubio-Fitzpatrick (2011) emphasize that cultural mediation from the interpreter is often necessary. Taft (1981) described the role of the cultural mediator to include interpreting expressions, intentions, perceptions,

and expectations of each cultural group to the other; to successfully incorporate cultural mediation into the act of interpreting, community interpreters need to know the cultural aspects of interpreting, what intercultural competence is, and how to develop it, because culture and social knowledge shape meaning in interpreter communication (Bancroft & Rubio-Fitzpatrick, 2011). For example, even if the languages in a conversation are interpreted accurately and completely, the client or the provider might not fully understand what is interpreted, causing the service to be put at risk if the client is not responding for cultural reasons. In turn, the lack of response may trigger the provider to sense that something is wrong, but the provider may have no idea of what to do about the problem. The California Healthcare Interpreters Association (2002) cites an hypothetical example of a Chinese mother who has recently given birth and may be resistant to going into a medical clinic for an appointment until a month after childbirth, due to a traditional cultural practice of the mother and baby remaining in the home for this period. Other times the client may feel lost because the systems in the country of service are extremely different from the equivalent systems in the client's country of origin. For instance, during a parent-teacher conference a child's father, from rural Pakistan, may have no idea of what is going on because he has never seen or heard of a report card. In such situations, the community interpreter has the responsibility to intervene to reduce the role of cultural differences and promote understanding by establishing and balancing the communication between the client and the provider of service. (Bancroft & Rubio-Fitzpatrick, 2011; Kantan, 2004; Taft, 1981). In sum, a community interpreter removes the cultural barriers along with the language barriers to bridge the understanding between

the client and the provider.

Intercultural Competence

The term intercultural competence, in its broadest sense can be defined as the ability to effectively interact with those from different cultures (Deardorff, 2011).

Describing the history of intercultural competence, Spitzberg and Changnon (2009) wrote that the concept and importance of intercultural competence came to be a salient issue almost 50 years ago, after World War II ended, due to the United States' interest and greater involvement in international business. Additionally, the search for international stability led to expanded foreign aid programs to countries with humanitarian challenges. The US Peace Corps was created, and individuals were recruited to serve in cultures that were very different than their own. By the mid-1970s scholars and practitioners were creating list of traits that were expected for volunteers' success in the Peace Corps. Many of these characteristics were related to interpreting, such as adaptability, language learning, responsibility, cultural sensitivity, patience, tolerance, and courteousness (Spitzberg & Changnon, 2009).

Ruben's Behavioral Approach

At the same time, Ruben (1976) developed one of the earliest intercultural competence frameworks in an effort to span the gap between what individuals know about intercultural situations and what they actually do in these situations. Ruben chose to focus on intercultural competence behaviorally because he believed that awareness and familiarity with relevant skills does not guarantee the ability to consistently display the related behaviors. In an effort to clarify the behavior intercultural competence concepts he

identified seven behavioral dimensions of competence.

For assessment, Ruben (1976) aligned the dimensions with observational procedures and rating scales. He believed that observing an individual's actions, rather than reading an individual's self-report in a journal or survey best assesses intercultural competence. The seven behavioral dimensions are the ability to be flexible, the ability to be nonjudgmental, tolerance for ambiguity, the ability to communicate respect, the capacity to personalize one's knowledge and perceptions, the ability to display empathy and the capacity for turn taking (Ruben, 1976). Thus the concept of behavior was integrated into the earliest intercultural competence constructs that focused on personality traits and knowledge.

Spitzberg and Changnon Analysis

Following Ruben's work several efforts were made to develop, validate, and hone measures of intercultural competence. Spitzberg and Changnon (2009) reviewed various contemporary models of intercultural competence. First they searched for extensive commonalities across the models, and then they divided them into five categories. The categories serve to delineate important distinctions among models, and provide a basis to begin my investigation as they represents a conceptual mixture of conveying views on intercultural competence. They are summarized as follows:

- 1) *Compositional models* identify the various components without specifying the relationships between them. They contain lists of the relevant attitudes, skills, knowledge and behaviors that create intercultural competence.
- 2) *Co-orientational models* focus on how communication takes place within

intercultural interactions, and how perceptions, meanings, and intercultural understandings are constructed during the course of these interactions.

- 3) *Developmental models* describe the stages of development through which intercultural competence is acquired.
- 4) *Adaptational models* focus on how individuals adjust and adapt their attitudes, understandings, and behaviors during encounters with people from other cultural backgrounds.
- 5) *Causal Path models* propose specific indirect relationships between the different components of intercultural competence.

After organizing these models into categories, Spitzberg and Changnon (2009) concluded that intercultural competence is still largely viewed as an individual trait concept, and is almost always measured accordingly. Many models assume a partner, and most define skills and knowledge as possessed by the individuals. The authors suggest that a relational perspective would permit for more sophisticated modeling of intercultural competence, located in the interaction itself, in addition to the individual who participates in the interaction. For example, a relationship perspective could include empathy and humility. Finally, the authors argue that any comprehensive model will need to conceptualize a minimum of five components: motivation, knowledge, skills, context and outcomes (Spitzberg & Changnon, 2009).

Deardorff *Pyramid Model of Intercultural Competence*

I found Deardorff's (2006) compositional model, Pyramid Model of Intercultural Competence (See Appendix B) to be particularly useful for this research project because

it contains a list of the relevant skills potential interpreters need to develop so that they can acquire and evaluate intercultural knowledge. I used it to create the individual and focus groups questions for the data collection.

A Delphi methodology was used to create the Deardorff Pyramid Model of Intercultural Competence by employing the research of 23 primarily US leading intercultural scholars (Spitzberg & Changnon, 2009). The Delphi technique is a process for structuring anonymous communication within a larger group of individuals in an effort to achieve consensus among group members (Linstone & Turoff, 1975). The structured nature of the method allowed all members to contribute their own conceptual perspectives and theories to convey to the process in terms of raw input equally without dominance by a few. The method used an inductive technique to build a model from those data through documented consensus (Spitzberg & Changnon, 2009). Also, the group of intercultural competence experts was asked about methods to assess intercultural competence. The group agreed on the following methods listed in order of agreement from most to least: case studies, interviews, mix of qualitative and quantitative measures, analysis of narrative diaries, self-report instruments, observation, focus groups, judgment by self and others, developing specific indicators for each component or dimension and evidence of each indicator, and triangulation. Triangulation occurs through the use of multiple collection efforts as corroborative evidence for the validity of qualitative research findings (Deardorff, 2011; Fantini, 2009).

In the resulting pyramid model, all of whose elements were derived from the above-mentioned Delphi methodology, the model's base is formed by the identification

of requisite attitudes. The first attitude is respect, meaning to value other cultures and culture diversity, and to move beyond one's own comfort zone. The next attitude is openness to intercultural learning and openness to people from other cultures withholding judgment, and last curiosity and discovery, meaning to tolerate ambiguity and uncertainty. Built on the base of attitudes are knowledge and comprehension, which includes cultural self-awareness meaning the way in which one's culture has influenced one's identity and others' worldviews. Also included are deep understanding and knowledge of culture, context, role and impact of culture, and culture-specific information such as sociolinguistic awareness.

Paralleling knowledge and comprehension in the pyramid, and also building on the base of attitudes are skills; to listen, to observe, to interpret, to analyze, to evaluate, and to relate. These critical thinking skills are necessary for the processing of knowledge and lead to the third level of the pyramid, which describes the desired internal outcome: informed frame of reference or filter shift. This consists of adaptability to different communication styles and behaviors as well as adjustment to new cultural environments, flexibility, referring to selecting and using appropriate communication styles and behaviors and cognitive flexibility, and an ethnorelative view in which the individual's culture is one of many equal worldviews. The last element is empathy, which means to understand and respond to others based on appropriate ways that meet their needs instead of basing actions on assumptions of how others desire to be treated. The fourth level, placed on the top of the pyramid is the desired external outcome; behaving and

communicating effectively and appropriately to achieve ones goals to some degree, based on one's intercultural knowledge, skills, and attitudes (Deardorff, 2009).

Deardorff (2009) notes that mindfulness is key in the process of building on attitudes and moving forward to the desired external outcomes, stating that individuals need to know what they are learning as they move up the pyramid. The development of intercultural competence is an ongoing process; it is important for individuals to reflect and assess their own development over time. Deardorff (2009) argues that intercultural competence is not a natural occurring phenomenon and educators must be intentional about addressing it. The author recommends that this model be used as a framework for guiding development and assessing individuals' intercultural competence as well as providing possibilities for development of measureable outcomes. Deardorff (2009) adds that becoming interculturally competent is a lifelong process and there is no one point where an individual becomes completely interculturally competent.

Bennett's Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity

Another useful model for this research is Bennett's (1986) Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS), which describes the stages of development through which intercultural competence is acquired. Kantan (2004) describes two main reasons the DMIS is useful when training interpreters. First, it is useful for understanding how beliefs about interpretation and interpreters can make more sense in the context of one of the stages. Second, the student-interpreters' developmental levels of intercultural competence can be benchmarked making the teaching match their developmental levels. Kantan (2004) adds that having teaching objectives match the students' developmental

levels will make it easier for the students to make the cognitive changes, such as growing cultural self-awareness, cultural-general knowledge, culture-specific knowledge and interaction analysis, necessary for developing intercultural competence.

Based on research in the 1970s and the 1980s, the DMIS was developed to explain how individuals respond to cultural difference and how their responses evolve over time. After years of observing people dealing with cross-cultural situations, Bennett (1986) decided to make sense of what was happening. In particular, he was interested in the experience of students who had studied abroad. To collect data to design this model, he observed college students from several months to years in international exchanges, workshops, classes, and graduate programs. Using concepts from cognitive psychology and constructivism he organized these responses from his observations into a continuum of six stages of personal growth that move from individuals avoiding cultural difference to individuals seeking cultural difference. As they move through the stages, individuals are increasingly sensitive and become more interculturally competent.

The first three stages of the DMIS are the ethnocentric stages of development, where the individuals' culture is the central worldview. In the first stage, denial of difference, the individual is unaware of cultural difference, has not considered how culture impacts one's own or other's lives, and may be perplexed when asked about his or her own culture, and making superficial statements of tolerance. Bennett (1986) is careful to note that oppressed people may navigate the development of intercultural sensitivity at this stage differently than those of the dominant group because they are very aware of the dominant group and the cultural differences. In the second stage, defense against

difference, individuals experience cultural difference in a polarized way “us and them,” protecting themselves with a hardened boundary between themselves and the others, and placing their own culture at the peak of development of civilization. The individuals’ cultural worldviews are protected by negatively evaluating people with different cultural behaviors or values. In the third stage, minimization of difference, the individuals’ familiar cultural worldviews are protected by believing “we are all alike,” acknowledging cultural differences but trivializing them, and similarly the knowledge is assumed rather than known. If the individuals continue to develop, they arrive at the intercultural sensitivity stage.

Here, individuals move from the ethnocentric to the ethnorelative stages of development where the individuals’ culture is part of many equal worldviews. In the fourth stage, acceptance of difference, the individuals experience cultural difference in context, and accept that all cultural behaviors and values exist in distinctive cultural contexts. The individuals are curious about what the alternatives to their own culture are. However, acceptance does not mean agreement or preference for alternative values. In the fifth stage, adaptation to difference, the individuals experience consciously shifting perspectives and intentionally altering behaviors. There is a submission of acceptance, and experience of intercultural empathy. The individuals’ modified behaviors flow naturally from the ability to empathize with another worldview. In the sixth and last stage, integration of difference, the individuals’ experiences are not defined in terms of any one culture; typically such people are bicultural or multicultural, and have as a wide repertoire of cultural perspectives to draw on. The individuals have tendencies to

facilitate constructive contact between cultures. The DMSI has served as the basis for several assessment tools addressing intercultural sensitivity and cross-cultural competence.

Kantan (2004) used the DMIS stages to describe developmental levels of intercultural interpreter beliefs, strategies, and behaviors. In this adapted framework are the idealized stages an interpreter passes through to obtain intercultural competence in growth from student to professional interpreter or translator. (See Appendix C) To facilitate teaching and assessing using the DMIS, Kantan (2004) grouped the stages into three levels. Level one includes DMSI stages one and two, denial-defense. An individual at this level is expected to behave as an outsider, expect similarity rather than difference, may have negative perceptions of some aspects of the other culture's behaviors, and believes that intercultural communication has little to do with interpreting. This student may not be ready to accept that their model of the world is limited, and has difficulty dealing with culture shock.

Level two includes DMSI stages three and four, minimization-acceptance. A student interpreter at this level is aware that interpreting goes beyond the dictionary, and knows that interpreting means thinking about insiders and outsiders. The student is ready to learn about discourse, meaning the relationship between form and function in verbal communication. The student is also ready to investigate genres across cultures, and learns that there is not just one appropriate style. Also, the student is ready to learn about politeness norms across cultures, and is learning that normal behavior is culture-bound

communication across languages. Finally, at this level the student is learning that culture means separating perception, interaction and evaluation.

Level three includes DMSI stages five and six, adaptation-integration. At this level the student interpreter is ready to explore underlying values and beliefs to different communication strategies. This individual is aware of the limits of the individual's own world as well as the individual's own toleration limits. The student now uses the word normal with caution, and begins to explore different interpreter beliefs.

The interpreter student will strengthen a meta-cultural set of mediational convictions, and will discuss interpreting in terms of utility, relevance, and intercultural ethics. As well, the student realizes interpreting as a powerful opportunity for bringing individuals and cultures closer to understanding and respecting each other's ways, and can begin using mediating strategies.

Kantan's application of interpreting to the DMIS is useful for this research because it can help understand and benchmark the stages of the developmental process in an interpreter student's beliefs, strategies, and behaviors as well as providing a guide for continued development. It serves as an assessment tool in the needs analysis of this research project.

Assessing Intercultural Competence

For the purpose of this study, I will refer again to Deardorff (2011) when she wrote that intercultural competence, in its broadest sense, can be defined as the ability to effectively interact with those from different cultures. Deardorff (2011) claims that intercultural competence models can help educators to specifically identify characteristics

of intercultural competence that can be prioritized and turned into clear learning goals, and objectives that describe how to get there. Then these goals and objectives can be measured or evaluated through an assessment plan. Fantini (2009) writes that the first step in developing a plan to assess intercultural competence is to clarify the definition and conceptualization. Fantini (2009) added that next, the program's goals and measurable objectives need to be considered because the assessment plan needs to be directly aligned with them, and because it is important to know what success will look like at the end of the course or program when creating an assessment plan. Deardorff (2011) suggests that assessing the complete realm of intercultural competence is too much, and it is important to prioritize specific aspects in intercultural competence at any given point due to the time, resources and effort that are needed. For this study, the Deardorff Pyramid Model of Intercultural Competence is used as a tool for needs assessment because it contains a list of the relevant skills potential interpreters need to acquire and evaluate intercultural knowledge. Two specific skills from this list are identified in the data collection of this research.

Additionally, the Kantan Interpreter Developmental Stages adapted framework was used as a reference to form questions for the focus group. Most of these methods are types of *indirect* assessments that are normally ongoing and not always obvious to the individual being assessed. Indirect assessment provides rich data, can be used for needs analysis in course design, and can also be used during the course to collect data for indication of student learning and development (Fantini, 2009).

English for Specific Purposes

Since the 1960s, English for Specific Purposes (ESP) courses have emerged in response to the global growth of the use of English in business and education, and have been a vital part of the teaching of English as a foreign or second language (Basturkmen, 2010; Belcher, 2009). Nunan (2004) argues that ESP courses are more motivating than general English courses because they provide language, material, and advice that will help learners with particular skills needed at a specific time or for their main field of study. ESP courses should be efficient, teaching only what is needed, thus wasting no time. Currently, ESP courses are held across the US and can be specifically designed for adult ELs in ABE programs, usually for intermediate or advanced level students. Examples of these courses include US Citizenship and English for Healthcare Workers. Numerous types of ESP courses have been meeting the specific needs of English language learners worldwide and in the US for several decades.

An ESP course is considered an important subcomponent of general language teaching that focuses on practical outcomes of learner needs. In particular, Hutchinson and Waters (2000) stated that ESP is an approach to language teaching based on learners' needs for learning. For example, Basturkmen (2010) described an ESP course in English for medical doctors that focused on the doctor's performance in doctor-patient consultations. After the course designer consulted with published course books and spent time observing the language used with doctor-patient consultations, she included a six language features such as key pragmatic language functions, lexical fields, discourse transactions, eliciting feedback responses, dealing with particularly sensitive issues, and

hedging as an significant parts of the course syllabus (Basturkmen, 2010). ESP courses are generally hands-on and engage a communicative approach to teaching. More precisely an absolute characteristic of an ESP course is that it makes use of the underlying methodology and the activities of the discipline it serves, and it centers on the language (grammar, lexis, register), skills, discourse, and genres appropriate to these activities (Dudley-Evans & St John, 1998). The ESP course teacher becomes more of a language consultant than a teacher in the focused field of study (Dudley-Evans & St John, 1998). From this account, it is clear that ESP is a practical approach to teaching English needed by US adult ELs eager to enter the workforce to earn a wage to support themselves and their family.

Needs Analysis

While all English as foreign language (EFL) or ESL course designers try to assess potential student needs, ESP course designers narrow the needs spectrum (Holm, 1996). According to Dudley-Evans and St. John (1998), needs analysis is the foundation of an ESP course and leads to a very focused course. The main concern of the needs analysis approach in course design is to put together a course that will enable learners to use language to accomplish the activities and tasks that are most important to them in their professional lives (Graves, 2000). In other words, the purpose is to create a course with learning goals and objectives that center on needs of the students that will enroll.

Hutchinson and Waters (2000) created a framework in which they claim most of the types of needs in ESP analysis can be sorted out. First, there are target needs, specifically what the learner needs to be able to do at the end of the course. The authors

subdivide target needs further into necessities, lacks and wants according to the perspective taken. Necessities are the type of needs determined by the target situation such as society, companies or employers. For example, a company will state that they need to have well trained employees with good English skills because they rely on exports. This information is collected from the experts in the field, the export companies. Lacks are what existing gaps need to be closed from the teaching perspective, and the teacher determines them. For example, the learner needs to understand common American idioms and expressions. This information is collected from finding out what the learners already know and comparing it to the target necessities to find the gap, what the group lacks. Wants are what the learner perceives as a lack, and the learners determine them by expressing them in a needs analysis data collection such as surveys or interviews. For instance, the learners want to increase their conversation skills. Learners' perceived needs cannot be ignored because of the importance of motivation in the learning process (Hutchinson & Waters, 2000; Stapa, 2003). By considering all of the stakeholders in target needs analysis, a course can be designed to meet the needs of the students.

The second type of needs described by Hutchinson and Waters (2000) are learning needs. To analyze learning needs, the authors state that the focus needs to be on investigating several elements. The first is to find out why the learners are taking the course. For instance, is it compulsory or optional, is there an apparent need or not, what the learners think they will achieve, and are status, money or promotion involved? The second is to find out how the learners learn. For example, what is their background, what

is their concept of teaching and learning, what methods will appeal to them and what techniques do they not like? Third, it is important to discover what resources will be available. This could include, experts, teachers, materials, and opportunities for outside of class activities. The fourth is to find out who the learners are. Information to gather includes age, sex, nationality, interests, preferred teaching styles, subject knowledge, and socio-cultural background. Fifth and sixth on the list is where and when the course will take place. In sum, this is the complex process recommended by Hutchinson and Waters (2000) to needs analysis that will lead to a very focused course in ESP. Course designers and instructors need to be careful to keep all of these areas of learning in harmony so that the students stay motivated and learn what they need to learn (Graves, 2000).

The most frequently used methods of gathering information for target needs are qualitative, and they need to be relevant to the purpose of the course. These include surveys and questionnaires, interviews, observation, text-based analysis, journals and diaries, as well informal consultations with sponsors, learners and experts (Hut, Johnson, Tullki & Vogt, 2013). Graves (2000) recommends initially collecting only a few types of information and learning how to use the data effectively because new course designers can get overwhelmed. Also, that author suggests that needs analysis be administered three times. The suggested times are a pre-course analysis that can inform decisions about content, goals, objectives, activities, and choice of material. Next an initial course assessment, and ongoing in the course so changes can be made when needed (Graves, 2000).

In conclusion, the ESP research confirms that a needs analysis is vital to ESP course design. The research has indicated that the first step of ESP course design is needs analysis. Through the above review of ESP literature, it is evident that both target situation needs and learning needs must be considered. The goal of this study is to investigate target needs, the intercultural competency skills adult ELs need to develop to succeed in a 40-hour community interpreter training course.

The Gap

There has been growing interest among my adult ELs to train and work in the field of community interpreting. These students need to be prepared so that they can succeed in the 40-hour interpreter training course. Previous research has shown the best way to determine what students need to be able to do to succeed in the target setting is to conduct a needs analysis (Basturkmen, 2010; Dudley-Evans & St John, 1998; Graves, 2000; Hutchinson & Waters, 2000). Recent studies have focused on many types of needs analysis that have been done for ELs preparing to succeed in professional training (Huht et al, 2013). However, there are few, if any, studies that have been written about the cultural competency skills needed of ELs entering the community interpreter-training course.

The purpose of this study is to investigate the intercultural competency skills adult ELs need to develop to succeed in a 40-hour community interpreter training course. This will involve investigating what gap exists between the intercultural competency beliefs, strategies and behaviors of perspective EL candidates and those needed to succeed in the interpreter training course. It is my hope that my findings will help me

develop an ESP course designed to prepare ELs to enroll in the professional community interpreter training course.

Chapter Summary

Adult ELs are anxious to study a profession that can provide them with a living wage. There is increased interest in the interpreting career, and the job outlook is excellent. While ELs bring a wealth of knowledge, experience and skill to the classroom, it is unclear to me, as an instructor, what their knowledge and developmental level of intercultural competency skills may be. There are also some particular aspects of deep culture that interpreter students especially need to be aware of and knowledgeable about to be successful as interpreters. It is clear from the literature that interpreters need to be well-versed in the customs, habits, values, and traditions of the two cultures that they are interpreting and mediating between. These issues can be mitigated by a needs analysis. In the following chapter, I will explain the methodology I plan to use in my study.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

This chapter describes the methodology I used in my study. First, the rationale for choosing this method and the description of the research design will be presented along with a description of the qualitative paradigm. Next, I will explain the data collection protocols and the procedures that were followed, then a description of how the data was analyzed. Lastly, verification and ethics will be addressed.

This study was designed to explore the intercultural competency skills needed by adult ELs who plan to become interpreters. I wanted to answer the questions:

- What intercultural competency skills do adult ELs need to develop to succeed in a 40-hour community interpreter training course?
- What gap exists between the intercultural competency beliefs, strategies and behaviors of perspective EL candidates and those needed to succeed in the interpreter training course?

For this research, I used the Deardorff (2006), Pyramid Model of Intercultural Competence, and Kantan (2004) Interpreter Developmental Stages adapted frameworks to determine the intercultural competency skills needed to guide the data collection design. The data was collected through individual interviews with experts in the area of interpreting and an adult ELs focus group.

Qualitative Research Paradigm

Qualitative research designs are created to collect information from a number of sources, and then to analyze the data in search of answers to questions that were derived before and during the research. The data collection produces a rich and descriptive account of naturally occurring behaviors in unique contexts (Mackey & Gass, 2005; Merriam 2009; Nunan, 1992). This research project uses a qualitative design because I am interested in people's insights and experiences, rather than a quantitative study that works with a limited number of variables and data that is expressed in numbers.

Qualitative designs are associated with a range of different methods, perspectives and approaches (Nunan, 1992). These might include individual interviews, focus groups, observations, and action research. I used individual interviews and a focus group to collect data that allowed me to continue to form questions during my research and led me to an in-depth understanding of my topic.

My research design aligns with grounded theory since the project started with no preconceived hypotheses (Merriam, 2009). Data collection began with individual interviews; I was able to continually compare the data as it was collected. This process led to the creation of new questions with the subsequent focus group typical of grounded theory research.

Data Collection

Participants

This study had two groups of participants. The first group had three participants, experts in the area of interpreting. Bella is a community interpreter 40-hour course trainer, and worked as an interpreter for many years. I chose to interview Bella in hopes of collecting data directly related to the community interpreter course content. Marco is a community college interpreting and translation instructor, and I hoped to obtain information from him that would reflect a college and academic perspective. Lily is a K-12 EL lead teacher. When she became the lead teacher five years ago, she took it upon herself to organize the interpreter program in her district. She said that many of the interpreters the district had been working with needed training in interpreter ethics and standards, intercultural competence, and language assessments. She organized the interpreter program for the district, developed and held training events given by interpreter agencies and school special education staff, and set the district requirements to work as a district interpreter. Because of this experience, I felt she was able to provide information about working as an interpreter in the school setting and the training needs of interpreters.

The second group had eight participants. They were adult ELs interested in being trained as community interpreters, and were at the time of this study my students. Other participant information is listed in the table below.

Table 1

Student participants by native country, highest post-secondary education in first language, and years in the USA

Student	Native country	Highest post-secondary education in first language	Years in the USA (to the nearest half year)
Vlad	Romania	4 year university degree	2
Carlos	Brazil	4 year university degree	2.5
Chan	China	4 year university degree	3
Kim	China	4 year university degree	1.5
Mesfin	Ethiopia	2 year technical school degree	5.5
Ha	Vietnam	4 year university degree	6
Fan	China	4 year university degree	1.5
Diego	Mexico	2 year technical school degree	2

Location/Setting

The research took place in an upper mid-west metropolitan area. The individual interviews with experts in interpreting took place in the offices of the participants. The focus group with student participants took place in my classroom, which is located in an ABE building.

Data Collection Technique 1

The first data collection technique was individual semi-structured interviews. This method allows the participants to agree or disagree and gives me the freedom to digress and probe to gather more information. There can be problems with interviews such as interviewees reporting what they think they should say, rather than what they really believe (Mackey & Gass, 2005). To reduce this problem I conducted the interviews in a non-judgmental manner, with a response that didn't reflect my own biases or ideas. At times I neutrally mirrored the interviewee's responses by repeating what was-said thus providing a chance for further reflection and input. I was careful to control my expressions and cues to help in creating a comfortable setting; the interviews were conducted in each participant's office with the doors closed. Being previously aware of these advantages and caveats helped the interview to go smoothly.

I wrote the interview questions according to the suggestions made by Foddy (2001). They were short and as simple as possible, open-ended, and used familiar words, so the participants would be likely to say what was really on their mind. The opening questions were broad to get the respondent's feelings or perceptions about the topic. The next set of questions was more focused and asked for details. The interviews ended with a summary and clarification of a few points. (See Appendix D for the full set of interview questions.) Following these details when designing the questions provided a good structure and well-thought-out questions.

Data Collection Technique 2

The second collection technique was a focus group with student participants. This method most often uses interview questions with a whole-group discussion with several participants. Also, focus groups use a moderator to keep the discussion going and focused (Mackey & Gass 2005). I chose this technique for the reason that it allows the participants to interact and to express their ideas orally, and because it is a good technique to gather data from students that are not as comfortable with other methods of responding such as writing.

To plan for this focus group, I began by analyzing the results from the first data collection, the individual interviews with interpreting experts, which indicated that the most important intercultural skills needed by students entering the community interpreter 40-hour training are to listen, and to analyze. So, my first goal was to collect data that would help me understand the student participants' familiarity and development with these skills. My next goal was to collect data to help understand the student participants' level as a group, on the Kantan Interpreter Development Stages adapted framework. To write the questions, I followed the suggestions made by Foddy (2001) as described under Data Collection Technique One.

Data Collection Technique 3

This student activity was my own adaptation of an activity from the book *Building Cultural Competence: Innovative Activities and Models*, (2012, p. 53). This activity included a stimulus, a photograph with President Obama sitting at his desk in the oval office. This activity included three levels of questions, questions to elicit only a

description of the photograph, questions to elicit an analysis of what was happening in the photograph and questions to elicit how the students felt about the photograph (See Appendix D).

Data Collection Technique 4

This student activity displayed five short sentences written with beginning-level vocabulary, yet that contained a short idiom or expression of more advanced vocabulary. The sentences were displayed on the SMART board. The students were asked to change the sentence so that very beginning ELs would be able to understand the meaning (See Appendix D).

Procedures

Participants

First the three expert interpreter participants each met with me separately, for about an hour. They answered interview questions and engaged in discussion. After the individual interviews, the eight student participants took part in a focus group I moderated. It involved interview questions and student activities and lasted about an hour.

Pilot Study

I am a novice researcher, so I piloted my individual interview questions with two colleagues that are adult EL teachers. This opportunity gave me some experience with developing skills in interviewing, anticipating and mirroring the interviewee's responses for clarification, and provided opportunities for further input into my design. For instance, after my experience with the pilot, I rewrote the questions I had planned

concerning the Kantan Interpreter Development Stages adapted framework because the questions needed to be broader to be able to collect the data I had in mind. Otherwise, the experience raised my confidence and increased my skills as an inexperienced interviewer.

Materials

The individual interview materials included a copy of the Deardorff (2006) Pyramid Model of Intercultural Competence, (See Appendix B) and the Kantan Interpreter Developmental Stages adapted framework (See Appendix C). Also included were interview questions about the importance of culture in interpreting, the career and the role of the community interpreter, the challenges interpreting students faced in training with the topic of intercultural competence skills and interpreter intercultural development levels on the Kantan Student-Interpreter Developmental Stages adapted framework. The next questions asked for more detailed information about all six skills that are part of the Deardorff Pyramid Model of Intercultural Competence (Deardorff, 2006). These asked the participants to talk about how that skill related to interpreting, and then to share a real life scenario of an interpreter using that skill on the job (See Appendix D).

The student focus group began with a few broad questions about culture and then went on to ask more specific questions concerning intercultural competence development. The next step included my own adaptation of an activity from the book *Building Cultural Competence: Innovative Activities and Models*, (2012, p. 53). This activity included a stimulus, a photograph with President Obama sitting at his desk in the oval office. This activity included three levels of questions, questions to elicit only a

description of the photograph, questions to elicit an analysis of what was happening in the photograph, questions to elicit how the students felt about the photograph.

The second focus group activity five short sentences written with beginning-level vocabulary, yet that contained a short idiom or expression of more advanced vocabulary. The students were asked to change the sentence so that very beginning ELs would be able to understand the meaning (See Appendix D).

Procedure

Individual interviews. I enthusiastically arrived at each interview with my prepared questions and my iPad to audio record the session. Each of the three participants met with me in their work office, and I conducted the interviews with the doors closed. They read and signed a copy of the consent form. To begin I shared a copy of the Deardorff (2006) Pyramid Model of Intercultural Competence, and the Kantan Interpreter Developmental Stages adapted framework. I talked about the models and pointed out the focus of the research on the pyramid illustration, the skills area. Then I asked questions about the importance of culture in interpreting, the career and the role of the community interpreter, and about the challenges interpreting students faced in training with the topic of intercultural competence skills. Next I asked the participant to talk about interpreter intercultural development levels on the Kantan Student-Interpreter Developmental Stages adapted framework. Following the initial questions, I asked for more detailed information about all six skills that are part of the Deardorff Pyramid Model of Intercultural Competence (Deardorff, 2006). These were to listen, to observe, to analyze, to interpret, to evaluate, and to relate. I addressed each skill separately by first reading a prepared

definition of the skill to demonstrate my understanding of the meaning. Next I asked the participant to talk about how that skill related to interpreting, and then to share a real life scenario of an interpreter using that skill on the job. The participants always spoke in general terms to protect the confidentiality of the people who may have been participants in the past interpreting scenarios. The interviews were audio-recorded, and I kept the recording in a locked drawer when not in use. The three interviews were informative, provided rich details, and were a pleasant experience for the participants and myself.

Focus group. To set the environment for the focus group, I created an almost circle of chairs in my classroom facing a SMART board on the wall that I used for projection. The focus group of eight participants met for about an hour in length. I was the moderator, and a colleague was my assistant moderator. She took notes and audio recorded the session. To begin, I explained the topic and reason for the focus group. I told the students why they were selected and reminded them to give each other a chance to participate. I began with asking the student participants a few broad questions about culture and then went on to ask more specific questions concerning intercultural competence development. All of the students participated in the discussion by sharing their ideas, opinions and perspectives.

Next, I used my own adaptation of an activity from the book *Building Cultural Competence: Innovative Activities and Models*, (2012, p. 53). This activity included a stimulus, a photograph with President Obama sitting at his desk in the oval office. His feet are up resting on the desk, and his hand is up near his face with two fingers resting on the side of his wrinkled forehead. His face has a serious yet relaxed expression. There

are three other men in the photograph, standing facing the president from on the other side of the desk, and one appears to be talking. They are all wearing suits. I gave each student a copy of the photograph and time to look at it, and I projected the photograph on the smart board, so I could refer to the enlarged photograph if needed for clarification. Next, I asked three levels of questions. For level one, I asked questions to elicit only a description of the photograph. For level two, I asked questions to elicit an analysis of what was happening in the photograph, what may have happened before the photograph, and what must be assumed to make sense of the photograph. For level three, I asked questions to elicit how the students felt about the photograph.

Lastly, I projected five short sentences on the SMART board. They were written with beginning-level vocabulary, yet that contained a short idiom or expression of more advanced vocabulary. For instance, It's raining cats and dogs. I asked the students to change the sentence so that very beginning ELs would be able to understand the meaning. I ended the focus group with a summary of what we had done during that hour. When clarification of participant responses was needed, I did it at the time that the questions were asked. The interviews were audio-recorded, and I kept the recording in a locked drawer when not in use. The focus group was a productive experience for the students and myself with very good discussions and rich data.

Data Analysis

Krueger and Casey (2000) describe a systematic analysis process that I followed when working with the data I collected from the individual interviews and the focus group. I started while I was interviewing the experts and moderating the group, so I

listened for thematic topics, asked for clarification, and probed for understanding. Right after the focus group I conducted a briefing with the assistant moderator that included reviewing her notes. Shortly after each individual interview, and the focus group, I listened to the recording. This gave me a good sense of the content to begin the transcription part of the analysis.

I transcribed the each audio-recording. Then, I printed the data, and played the recording a third time while I read along looking for accuracy, and I made corrections as needed. Next, to verify the data, I conducted a debriefing with my colleague noting themes, thematic topics, interpretations and ideas in writing. Lastly, I coded topics on the printed copy and underlined important quotes. I carefully read the coded transcripts a few times to look for emerging themes question by question, and then big ideas overall. I described the findings in writing, in narrative form. I verified the report by sharing it with my colleague then finalized the report. This system of analysis guided me through a consistent process that enabled me to prepare the results for this research (Krueger & Casey, 2000).

It is important to note that I carried out the analysis in two parts. After transcribing and analyzing the three individual interviews with the expert participants, I concluded that the results indicated that the most important intercultural skills needed by students entering the community interpreter 40-hour training are to listen, and to analyze. I used those results to form questions for the student participant focus group.

Verification of Data

Verification of data took place in a few ways. For peer examination, I discussed the process of my study with my colleagues, and I relied on my peer reader and one other colleague to verify the data and my interpretations. Additionally, I continually self-reflected throughout the research project in regards to my assumptions, worldview and biases that may have affected the investigation (Mackey & Gass, 2005; Merriam, 2009). With this verification in place, the data report is reliable and valid.

Ethics

This study employed the following safeguards to protect participants' rights: Hamline University's Human Subject proposal was completed and approved by Hamline University. Permission to conduct this study was obtained from the school district where the research took place and also from the ABE program manager. Research objectives were shared with participants, and their consent was obtained in the form of a letter. Participants were informed that they could withdraw at any time without repercussions. Anonymity of participants was maintained and pseudonyms were used for names within the report. During the interviews the doors were closed. The recordings were kept in a locked drawer when not in use, and after the recordings were transcribed, they were destroyed.

Chapter Summary

In this chapter I described the methodology I used in my study. A description of the qualitative research paradigm, the rationale for choosing this method and a description of the research design I used were presented. The data collection protocols

and the procedure for analyzing the data were described. The next chapter presents the results of the study.

CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS

This study was designed to explore ways that I can help my adult ELs to prepare to enter a community interpreter training course. This chapter presents the results from the data collection methods that I used: individual interviews and a focus group. The first data collection technique was individual interviews, and the results from those interviews helped to create the focus group questions. The results will be presented in the same order. Through the collection of these data, I hoped to find the answer to the following questions:

- What intercultural competency skills do adult ELs need to develop to succeed in a 40-hour community interpreter training course?
- What gap exists between the intercultural competency beliefs, strategies and behaviors of perspective EL candidates and those needed to succeed in the interpreter training course?

This chapter helps to answer that question.

Individual Interviews

I interviewed three experts in the area of interpreting. Bella is a community interpreter trainer, Marco is a community college interpreting and translation instructor, and Lily is a K-12 EL lead teacher.

The first goal of the individual interviews was to collect broad information about the importance of culture in interpreting, the role of the community interpreter, student

interpreter developmental stages, and intercultural competency skills. I used the Deardorff (2006) Pyramid Model of Intercultural Competence and Kantan's (2004) Interpreter Developmental Stages as stimuli during the discussion. Copies were handed out at the interview.

When I analyzed this part of the data I found two overarching themes: interpreter judgment calls, and intercultural competence development. The second goal of the individual interviews was to collect more specific information about interpreting and intercultural competency skills. All three interviews resulted in useful detailed information.

Interpreter Judgment Calls

All three participants agreed that interpreter judgment calls are key to culturally competent interpreting. This means that when an interpreter is working the interpreter has to make very quick in-the-moment decisions on how to interpret the present situation. The interpreter does this by balancing several factors such as ethics, adherence to meaning, and tone. To achieve this balance and maintain professional demeanor, the interpreters need to know how to adhere to professional ethics, a set of rules that govern the conduct and behavior of a member of a profession. For instance, The National Code of Ethics for Interpreters in Health care includes confidentiality, accuracy, impartiality, role boundaries, cultural awareness, respect, advocacy, professional development, and professionalism (Bancroft & Rubio-Fitzpatrick, 2011). Interpreters rely on ethical codes to help them make judgment calls. For example, Bella described an incident at a medical appointment when a client was told by a physician that he had about three months to live.

Bella noted that in this individual's culture, doctors and family members do not tell people that they are terminally ill. The interpreter needed to make the choice to go against strong cultural practices or to interpret exactly what the doctor said. Bella added that this included the details of the disease being terminal because interpreters are expected to make ethically sensitive decisions with each client and provider they work with.

Interpreters need to know the deep culture of the people that they are interpreting for. Bella said that they need to know which cultural group or geographical region of the spoken language their clients belong to, since at times there are multiple ways to say things, adding that words need to be chosen carefully to present the clearest meaning. Bella also noted that sometimes there are different labels for the same noun, depending on what part of the country the client is from. For instance, Bella said that at a training class she taught, there were two Somali student interpreters talking about the Somali word that is used for the English word pancreas; they discovered that north Somali and south Somali have two distinct words for that particular body part. Bella said that it is an interpreter's responsibility to know what words to choose at any given time. Lily shared another example; "I have a meeting this afternoon with a Hmong mom and dad of a first grader about sensitive topics around the area of mental health. For this meeting it is important to have a highly qualified interpreter." Lily added, "The most difficult task for the interpreter is going to be interpreting the principal's language, who will speak with a Western mindset of medicine, for the parents who come from a shamanist belief system." Marco stated that interpreting is not a word-to-word translation and interpreters have to make a split-second decision on what word or phrase choice they will use.

The tone or the feeling of messages also influences meaning. Lily explained, “In a case where the client or provider is angry when they are speaking, the interpreter needs to provide the message with the same emotion and tone to express accurate meaning.” Lily said that if a teacher is enthusiastic at the progress a student is making in school, the interpreter needs to share that same excitement in their voice. To render the tone along with the words helps the client to best understand the message. Lastly, Marco said that language and culture are very intertwined. Interpreters must have cultural humility as well as awareness, and have a deep knowledge of their own culture and the one they will interpret for better understanding between the two parties.

In conclusion, all three participants agreed that the interpreters need to ethically foster direct communication between the client and provider. They need to capture and communicate the meaning of the message accurately by interpreting the tone and choosing the culturally correct words. Interpreters need to be continually aware that language and culture are very intertwined.

Development of Intercultural Competence

I asked the participants to look at the Kantan Interpreter Developmental Stages and talk about the stage student interpreters were at when beginning their training. This information is useful because Kantan (2004) states that it can help understand and benchmark the stages of the developmental process in an interpreter student’s beliefs, strategies, and behaviors as well as providing a guide for continued development. Specifically, I asked this question:

Looking at Kantan's (2004) Interpreter Developmental Stages, at what stages do you typically find new student interpreters?

Bella and Marco said it is difficult to know what stage any given student is at any given time. Marco explained that students may or may not go through all of the developmental stages when in training, yet they become very skilled as interpreters. Marco said, "Not all immigrants have the same life experiences." Marco added that people need training and they need to start somewhere, referring to the Kantan stages of development not being useful to him as an instructor. Marco said that it takes time to become an intercultural interpreter, and humility is the better way to approach culture, and is the key to success. He explained that this means, "I don't know much, and I am willing to learn, and I know that I will never know everything, because it is simply impossible." Lastly, Marco said, "I've been an interpreter for over 30 years and I'm still becoming [one]." In summary, Marco voiced that interpreters need to be mindful that intercultural development is an individual lifelong process.

When asked the question "When teaching the training course, what are the most difficult concepts for students to comprehend?" all participants agreed that it was the culture-related knowledge. Bella said that cultural understanding is individual, meaning that individuals are at a different places in their development of cultural competence. Bella added that a student's developmental level of intercultural competence rest on the student's level of acculturation in the dominant culture, first language education, education in English, American education, and life experiences. Bella shared an example about a Somali person who has been in America for 15 years. Bella feels that a person is

going to better understand American cultural practices such as the laws, like being required to use a car seat, the longer they are in America. Bella said that someone who had been here for 15 years is able to merge both cultures, operating between the two. Lastly, Bella commented that the culture portion of training is the most challenging and interesting for her to teach. In sum, Bella and Marco voiced their beliefs that the interpreting students bring a variety of background experiences to build their training upon and, in turn, interpreter instructors need to be aware of this and meet the students at their stages in development. Lily does not train interpreter students, so she did not respond to this question.

The second group of data from the individual interviews answers specific questions about the intercultural competency skills from the Deardorff Pyramid Model of Intercultural Competence and interpreting. The skills are listed as to listen, to observe, to interpret, to analyze, to evaluate, and to relate. Referring to each skill as a separate question, I first read a definition of the skill to verify my understanding as it relates to interpreting. Next, I asked the participants to talk about the importance of the skill in interpreting and to provide a job scenario where interpreters use the skill. The expert interpreter participants recommended that the following skill development be incorporated into an adult ELs community interpreter preparatory class: three recommended to analyze, three recommended to listen, one recommended to relate and one recommended to evaluate. The following data combined responses from all three participants.

To listen. Several of the participants expressed the importance of listening during the interviews. Bella noted, “so many words we use [in American English] may not exist in their first language.” Meaning those words need to be carefully listen for by the interpreter. Lily noted particularly the importance of cultural sensitivity and listening carefully when translating from English to Somali when she said, “Somali language is more direct. A teacher may want a child to participate more in class and say to the parent, ‘He is not making his ideas known to the class.’ That culturally makes no sense in Somali.” Marco and Lily said that interpreters need to be trained to do many different kinds of listening such as listening for meaning, contextual and cultural knowledge, voice tone and emotion, and the pace of the language. Bella and Marco added that interpreters need to be able to hear and identify unfamiliar words such as acronyms and abbreviations used in American education, vocabulary specific to the situation, and the words they need to address that are not present in their specific language. Also, Lily said that interpreters need to be able to reduce the complexity of the language as they listen to make it available for interpreting into the needed language. All three participants agreed that interpreters need to learn to listen and analyze the language.

To observe. All three participants noted that interpreters need to know and understand that communication is made up of many aspects other than oral language. Lily explained, “Parents get excited and really happy about how their child is doing in school. That excitement needs to be interpreted with the language. Interpreters need to convey that in their voice and body language.” Marco said that interpreters need to watch for paralinguistic elements such as body language and facial expressions. Bella said that

interpreters need to learn to observe language gestures that are culture specific. Also, Bella gave an example stating that even in Arabic-speaking countries gestures differ from country to country.

To interpret. All three participants talked about the challenge of having to interpret words that may not be present in their native language. Lily noted, “The interpreter must find similar words or expressions in their own language.” Bella said that interpreters need to listen very carefully for unfamiliar words, such as vocabulary specific to the situation, because so many words may not exist in their second language, and they will need to interpret those words. Marco gave an example of the importance of accurate interpreting skills with the description of a horrible result from poor interpreting. Marco said that he is aware of a situation when a Spanish-speaking person called 911 and said that his wife could not breathe, he said he needed help and gave his address. The person answering the 911 call did not interpret the call correctly. The 911 call person told the emergency people that the man said his wife was short of breath and also gave the incorrect address. Marco noted that the man’s wife died from lack of timely and correct medical help. In conclusion the participants have shared that interpreting accurately is a very important skill.

To analyze. All three participants strongly indicated that interpreters need to develop analytical skills to understand the meaning of communication and cultural interactions in the interpreting session. Lily said that interpreters need to learn to think about the two different systems [two cultures] each time they work: how they interact, their similarities and differences. Lily noted, “It is important to recognize language transfer; implicit

[language that may be implied and not fully expressed] becomes explicit [language that is clearly stated and in detail] in their minds and then goes back to implicit with the interpretation.” Lily said, “ Interpreters must find a similar expression in the client’s language, and know what the best string of words is to get the meaning across.” Marco shared that a novice interpreter falls into the comfort of doing literal word-to-word rendering, and that may not have meaning in the client’s language. Marco said that interpreters need to make decisions very fast, and assess and evaluate in a few seconds, making interpreting a very complex job. Interpreter students need to know how to develop analytical skills in intercultural interactions. Lastly, Marco added that interpreters need to know and follow standards of practice that allow clients to have a voice: the interpreter needs to know when to intervene with cultural mediation, and do it as little as possible. All three participants gave good reasons and examples of the need for interpreters to develop analytical skills.

To evaluate. All three participants talked about the value of the skill of evaluating. They shared that students need to be familiar with of two types of evaluating. First, Lily said that interpreters need to be aware of their own judgments because they must not be shared while interpreting. Lily said, “At a school Latino parent meeting with the superintendent, one of the interpreters was inserting her own opinion when interpreting information about a school from the superintendent, and this was very wrong. She will not be hired again.” Bella shared that interpreters also need to be careful about evaluating personality traits versus cultural behavior. For example, Bella said that a client might not make eye contact for two reasons: one may be the personality of an extremely shy person,

and the other may be cultural. Bella said that it is the interpreter's job to evaluate the situation and respond appropriately. Bella noted, "Interpreters need to know that when they are in an interpreting session that they shouldn't share their own ideas, what they have heard, or their own opinions."

Secondly, interpreter students need to learn to self-evaluate. Marco noted, "After each session they need to reflect on the job they did, how it went and the choices they made." Marco added that this is the time when they need to think about their intercultural competence, so that they can continue to develop as an interculturally competent interpreter. All three participants felt the skill of evaluating was important in an interpreter's job.

To relate. The participants talked about two types of relationships in interpreting. First is the professional relationship. Lily shared, "They [interpreters] need to establish or build trust [with clients] in a short amount of time. To do this they explain their credentials and talk about how long they have been interpreting. Trust is really important to the LEP (limited English proficiency, my addition) [client] before they will talk about personal issues." The second type is personal relationships. Bella said that interpreters need to know and adhere to interpreting standards and ethics, which say that there is no social relationship or contact outside of the interpreting session with the client. They need to avoid personal relationships because it affects the outcome of the appointment. Bella stated that interpreters are never to give out their personal phone number because their job is to help only at the session, and to support clients to become more independent. Bella noted that some people are very social by culture and enjoy making connections

wherever they go. Bella added that this could also present a challenge for interpreters that are strongly connected to the ethnic community. Bella further explained that complaints from clients often include unclear understanding of role boundaries. Ethics dictate that interpreters cannot work for people they know or family members. Bella added that the interpreter often has to make the decision when they arrive to the appointment whether or not they can stay and do the job depending on their relationship with the client. (If they cannot do the job due to a relationship with the client, they will still get paid). Bella further noted that by adhering to ethics and standards, interpreters reduce risk to the clients.

Bella shared the following experience “An interpreter was at a medical appointment and was working with a LEP [client] from her own culture. This is often the case. After the provider finished talking with the LEP [client], a new mom, the interpreter added her own cultural bias into the communication and said to the mom that her baby would love her more if she breast fed the baby rather than use a bottle. This upset the provider since that was not what he said. The provider then told the interpreter to make sure she tells the mother that her baby will love her no matter how she feeds the baby, as long as she feeds the baby when she is hungry.”

Marco shared that interpreters also have to think about humility, about being sympathetic and not robotic. Marco said that for community interpreters, the sympathy piece is important and they need to balance it with boundaries, standards and ethics. Marco further noted that relating helps interpreters understand what’s going on with everyone that is a participant. Interpreters are there, they are not invisible, and to do this

they have to develop critical thinking. The participants indicated the importance of professional and personal relationships in interpreting need to follow ethics and standards, yet be balanced with humility and cultural understanding.

With this qualitative research design I was able to collect rich data from three interpreter experts with interviews. When I analyzed the data I found information to help me answer my research questions, and also to help me create new questions designed for discussion in a student participant focus group.

Student Focus Group

The second method of data collection was a focus group of eight adult ELs that were enrolled in my advanced EL class at the time of the data collection. A focus group can be used as a type of indirect assessment. Fantini, (2009) stated that indirect assessment provides rich data, which can be used for needs analysis in course design. The student participants had all indicated an interest in the career of interpreting and consented to participate in this research project. First, I asked a few broad questions about culture and then more specific questions concerning intercultural competence development. Second, I asked questions and facilitated short whole-group activities to assess their ability and understanding of the expert-identified intercultural competence skills of to listen and to analyze.

Culture

When the eight student participants were asked what they thought about when they heard the word culture, Diego said, “First I think about my country and next American culture.” A few student participants mentioned behaviors, attitudes, music and

food. Other student participants talked about difference in regards to manners and ways people live and dress and one student participant added that it was good to accept difference in another culture. Vlad expressed that culture is “knowledge passed on from generation to generation.”

When asked what was the same about their culture and American culture, the ELs did not respond with much detail. A few student participants answered using a percent comparison. For instance Carlos noted that his Brazilian culture was about 80% the same as American culture. Vlad answered that some religious holidays were the same, such as Christmas and Easter. Another student participant said there is a huge difference, and a few others responded by saying that more things were different because it is a different culture.

When asked what was different about their culture and American culture, they were expressive, stating many examples. Mesfin commented, “People from the same culture can easily understand what you need. Here you have to tell what you need. It depends where you live, and how you communicate. Here, communities don’t always know what I want.” By the word use of communities the student is referring to groups within our communities such as schools, medical clinics, people at his work place, or people in stores. Several student participants talked about education “I’m thinking about education. You know in China, before kids go to college, most of the kids don’t work part-time, just the parents support them. In many families that is OK. In many poor families parents cannot support [their children’s] college. Here they encourage teenagers to work part-time; they learn how to get money. I think it’s better than in China,”

reported Chan. When discussing classroom behaviors, Fan shared, “Here, I show my smile and say, ‘Hi Tina’, when you come to class here, if you stand by the door, [there is] lots of excitement when you greet the teacher. In China, very quiet.” Other student participants spoke about differences in parenting, individual independence, attitudes, relationships, celebrations, time spent with family, and communication. Diego reported, “The people here like to express their feelings. In Mexico, most of them keep their feelings [inside] and they don’t express them.”

During the broad culture discussion with the student participants there was evidence that they are aware of surface culture elements such as dress, music and food, and deep culture elements such as religious traditions, ideals governing child raising, body language and manners to greet teachers. The student participants also gave indication of intercultural sensitivity by stating ways that they are aware of cultural difference and how culture impacts their and others’ lives. There are examples that they see culture as “us and them”; however, there is also evidence that the student participants are beginning to understand that an individual’s culture is one of many equal worldviews, especially when they talked about education. This data collected is helpful in understanding their intercultural competence development.

Intercultural Competence Skills

To Listen

To assess the student participants understanding and development of the intercultural competence skill of to listen, I asked the student participants what helps us understand when we are listening to someone speak. Their answers included examples of

body language, context, facial expressions, voice, and tone and pace, and word stress.

Vlad talked about how gestures have different meanings in different cultures. He said, “My friend is from Greece and she was going there for a visit. I asked her to get me something, and she nodded yes, like here in America. But I didn’t get anything.” Then he went on to explain that the head nod of up and down that means yes in America means no in Greece. Chan said that he thought Americans showed emotion in their faces more than many other cultures. The students expressed their understanding of the importance of recognizing non-verbal communication in constructing meaning.

To Analyze

To check to see if they understood that interpreting goes beyond the dictionary, and to assess their ability to analyze words in a sentence, I asked the student participants in a student-friendly way, if they thought that all communication had literal meaning. They all said no. Diego commented, “You have to think and translate the right thing. If it is important you have to make sure you don’t make a mistake.”

To further check their understanding as a whole group, we looked at five short sentences written with beginning-level vocabulary that contained an idiom or expression of more advanced-level vocabulary. I asked the student participants to change the sentence so that very beginning ELs would be able to understand the meaning. With three out of the five sentences, they reworded the sentences using new words with literal meanings in place of the idioms or expressions. The other two sentences they did not know the meaning of the expression or idiom, so they were unable to reword those sentences. The student participants demonstrated their knowledge of the assessed

concept, that interpreting goes beyond the dictionary. Furthermore, the student participants were able to analyze the idioms or expressions in three of the five sentences and replace them with words that have literal meanings.

Table 2
Student Participant Examples of Analyzed and Reworded Sentences

<u>Number</u>	<u>Original Sentence</u>	<u>Reworded Sentence</u>
1	It's raining cats and dogs.	It's raining really hard and a lot.
2	I'm keeping my fingers crossed for a sunny afternoon.	I am hoping for an afternoon with sun.
3	I'm afraid so.	I don't know what that means.
4	The new car cost me an arm and a leg.	The new car cost much money.
5	Thanks for getting back to me.	I don't know what that means.

To assess the student participants' ability to describe and analyze without judgment or feelings I used my own adaption of an activity from the book *Building Cultural Competence: Innovative Activities and Models* (Berardo & Deardorff, 2012, p. 53). This activity is named To Describe-Analyze-Evaluate, and it included a stimulus, a photograph with President Obama sitting at his desk in the oval office. His feet are up resting on the desk, and his hand is up near his face with two fingers resting on the side of his wrinkled forehead. His face has a serious yet relaxed expression. There are three other men in the photograph, standing facing the president from on the other side of the desk, and one appears to be talking. They are all wearing suits. I gave each student a copy of the photograph and time to look at it, and I projected the photograph on the SMART

board, so I could refer to the enlarged photograph if needed for clarification. Next, I asked three levels of questions that are included with the activity in the book.

Level one. I asked questions to elicit only a description of the photograph. The questions were: What was said? What do you see? To begin a few student participants were talking about how they felt about the picture and I redirected them to the original questions. The student participants described 17 nouns in the photograph, most were singular and four were plural. They said the words chair, desk, phone, paper, pen, notebook, picture, plant, folder, garbage can, carpet, tie, shirt, books, four men, suits, and shoes. They also said men were talking, sitting, listening and thinking. Once the student participants understood the task, they completely described the photograph without judgments or feelings.

Level two. I asked questions to elicit an analysis of what was happening in the photograph, what may have happened before the picture, and what must be assumed to make sense of the photograph. I also wanted to gain a general idea of the student participants' ability to analyze the photograph. The questions were: How do these descriptions or observations fit together? What do you need to know to make sense of the photograph? What would help explain what you see? Why is this happening?

An overarching theme from the student participants' responses was evidence of knowledge and meaning of nonverbal communication. Vlad and Kim said that the men's position of standing, and Mr. Obama's position of having his feet on his desk indicated that there might have been an important meeting just prior to the conversation in the photograph. They also added that the men standing indicated that the current meeting was

short. Chan said the subject was not formal because three men were standing and Mr. Obama had his feet on the desk. Chan also said the informal gestures of standing indicated that they might not be thinking or talking about a difficult problem. Carlos noted, “They are a close team, they are standing next to each other, [and] they look comfortable talking.” Mesfin, Ha, and Diego all said that the men looked like they were listening, thinking and asking questions. Mesfin added “This is Obama’s office, Obama was in there and then they came in to make him sign something, convince him of their idea, but first he wants to understand, he keeps asking questions.” Ha said the two fingers on Mr. Obama’s head meant that he was thinking. Some student participants demonstrated their ability to connect ideas during the discussion. For instance, Ha said that it looked like Mr. Obama needed to make a decision, and then Diego added that he thought the group had just finished an important meeting. Next, Kim connected the previous thoughts and said that it was a congressional meeting and they talked about war. In conclusion, the student participants used nonverbal communication clues to analyze the importance and formality of the meeting, the relationship between the men, their current actions, and the possible time length of the meeting. The student participants also indicated that it would help to know what the men were doing prior to the photograph to understand what they were doing in the photograph.

Level three. I asked questions to elicit how the students felt about the photograph. The questions were: How do you feel about what you see in the photograph? What positive or negative feelings do you have? What is your opinion of this photograph?

As the facilitator I did not specifically say these questions were about the photograph in general or about Mr. Obama's feet on the desk. The student participants, for the most part, inferred the questions were about Mr. Obama's feet on the desk. An overarching theme that developed was cultural behavior. Chan and Fan shared negative feelings about the photograph. Carlos said, "If this was the president of Brazil this would be negative. In this country I think negative too. It's not OK in this country either. Not a good position." Chan referred to Mr. Obama's feet on the desk added that it was a picture of bad behavior.

Mesfin, Ha and Diego said that they had positive feeling about Mr. Obama's feet on the desk. Diego shared, "I think many presidents can sit this way, but no pictures. I think Obama puts his legs and face on the desk. Obama is a president, but also a resident. It's OK, politicians are busy with lots of stress and sometimes they need to relax, it's OK." Some student participants felt both positive and negative or neutral. Carlos said he felt comfortable with the photograph, but if it was important, he felt negative. Kim said she felt neutral, adding no further explanation.

Some student participants added multiple perspectives to their ideas during the student participant discussion. For example, Vlad said, "For me, for example, it is not a good feeling because in my country, it's an unusual position. It is not a good position for official people to stay so." Later, Vlad remarked, "He's working? Maybe he is raising his legs for good circulation. But I think the other three people are tired too, like the president, and I think he could invite the others to sit down, no? If they talk friendly." Vlad demonstrated his ability to integrate ideas when he said he felt comfortable with the

picture of Mr. Obama with his feet on the desk, but if it was an important meeting he felt negative about Mr. Obama's legs on the desk.

The main goal of this activity, To Describe-Analyze-Evaluate, was to assess the student participants' ability to describe and analyze without judgment or feelings. The evidence indicated that all of the student participants were able to accomplish this goal. Another goal was to assess their ability as a group to analyze the photograph, for a baseline of their abilities of the intercultural competence skill, to analyze. The group of student participants showed evidence of this ability. The student participants offered responses that presented multiple perspectives, and solutions that were consistent with the evidence in the picture. Furthermore, during the discussion they showed their abilities to connect their ideas with other student's ideas.

Conclusion

In analyzing the data I hoped to find the answer to the following questions:

- What intercultural competency skills do adult ELs need to develop to succeed in a 40-hour community interpreter training course?
- What gap exists between the intercultural competency beliefs, strategies and behaviors of perspective EL candidates and those needed to succeed in the interpreter training course?

The data presents evidence that helps to answer this question. With the individual expert interviews two overarching themes were discovered, interpreter judgment calls, and intercultural competence development. Judgment calls were found to be important to culturally competent interpreting because when an interpreter is working, the interpreter

has to make very quick decisions on how to interpret the present situation by balancing several factors. To do this, it is important for the interpreter to be aware and knowledgeable of several aspects of the job. The expert participants stated that these factors include knowing interpreter ethics and standards well, comprehending non-verbal communication, and understanding the deep cultural aspects of the two cultures that are being interpreted. The data derived from the discussions also evidenced that many complex factors are involved in interpreters' intercultural development, making the process an individual life-long journey. Additionally, the data indicated that there is no expected intercultural developmental level for student interpreters entering training. It is expected that interpreter students will enter training at varying levels of development and continue to increase their intercultural competence and humility as they learn and work. The individual interviews concluded that all of the intercultural competence skills discussed during the data collection are important for interpreters to develop, but especially significant are the skills of to listen and to analyze.

Much was learned about the student participants' cultural knowledge and conceivable intercultural development from the data collected during the student participant focus group. During the broad culture discussion with the student participants there was evidence in the data that they are aware of surface culture and deep culture elements. The student participants also gave indications of intercultural sensitivity, and indication that they are beginning to understand that an individual's culture is one of many equal worldviews. The student participants expressed their understanding of the importance of recognizing nonverbal communication in constructing meaning, an

important aspect of the skill to listen. Furthermore the student participants' data showed evidence of their ability to analyze with the idioms or expressions activity as well as with the Mr. Obama activity. With that activity, the student participants offered responses that presented multiple perspectives, and solutions that were consistent with the evidence in the picture. Last, the student participants showed their abilities to connect their ideas with other students' ideas. The data from both groups of participants helps to answer the project's questions.

Chapter Summary

In this chapter I presented the results of my data collection. I reported the data collected from the individual expert interviews and the student focus group. As well, I discussed how the data helps to answer the project's questions. In Chapter Five I will discuss my major findings, their implications, and suggestions for further research.

CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSIONS

In this research project I attempted to answer the following questions:

In preparing a needs assessment for a 40-hour community interpreter training course,

- What intercultural competence skills do adult ELs need to develop?
- What gap exists between the intercultural competency beliefs, strategies and behaviors of perspective EL candidates and those needed to succeed in the interpreter training course?

To answer this question I interviewed three experts in the field of interpreting. I interviewed a community interpreter trainer, a community college interpreting and translation instructor, and a K-12 lead ESL teacher. I also held a focus group discussion that consisted of eight adult ELs that have shown interest in the field of interpreting to investigate their intercultural competence skills and development. In this chapter I will report my major findings, the limitations of my study, its implications, and suggestions for further research.

Major Findings

This study was designed to explore the intercultural competency skills needed by adult ELs who plan to become interpreters. After analyzing the rich and descriptive data I gathered, I have two major findings. First, I learned that all of the intercultural competence skills on the Deardorff Pyramid Model of Intercultural Competence (2006) are considered by the experts that I interviewed to be imperative for interpreters to

develop to be successful on the job. In particular, the skills of to analyze and to listen are two that are highly recommended to be included in a adult EL community interpreters' preparatory class. Second, expert participants indicated that intercultural competence development is a complex and life long individual journey for interpreters. Also, while I am not trained to interpret these results, my impression is that the student participants from the focus group seemed to be at the end of level one and the beginning to middle of level two in Kantan Interpreter Developmental Stages. This research helped to answer my questions, and will contribute valuable information in designing an ESP interpreter preparatory course for my ELs.

Implications

With this research I learned much; in particular that my research demonstrates an adult EL community interpreter preparatory training course needs to have goals and objectives that focus on intercultural competency skills since these skills are needed to learn and utilize deep cultural knowledge, understand others' worldviews, and sociolinguistic awareness. The data results indicated that it is important for adult ELs to develop the two intercultural competence skills of listening and analyzing to be successful in the 40-hour community training course. Concerning the skill of listening, the expert participants indicated that interpreter students need to know and be trained to do many different types of listening. These include listening for meaning, contextual and cultural knowledge, voice tone, emotion, and the pace of the language as well as understanding nonverbal communication.

Additionally, they noted that interpreter students need to become aware that there are many words that are used in English that do not exist in other languages, and they must be carefully listened for while working. Interpreter students need to be able to listen to identify and hear unfamiliar words such as acronyms and abbreviations used in education, and vocabulary specific to the situations where they will be working such as the medical field. Additionally interpreter students need practice in reducing the complexity of the language while they are listening.

The expert participants identified the skills of listening and analyzing to be the most important intercultural competency skills of the six listen on the Deardorff pyramid of intercultural competency. I do not have professional training in intercultural competence assessment, yet I am able to informally assess the skills through student group discussion and activities. To assess the students' understanding and ability of the intercultural competence skill of to listen, I asked the student participants, as a whole group, what helps us understand when we are listening to someone speak. They named several elements of verbal and nonverbal listening. Also, evidence of their knowledge of non-verbal communication was shown when they talked about the picture of President Obama. Once again the student participants spoke of several elements of nonverbal communication they saw in the photograph to explain what was happening. This assessment indicated that the student participants are familiar and aware of nonverbal communication and how it helps construct meaning in discourse. The student participants also demonstrated their understanding of the concept of reducing the complexity of language with the five sentence idiom/expression activity. While the data is unable to

indicate any type of developmental levels, it does indicate that these student participants are familiar and aware of the assessed concepts associated with the skill to listen.

Regarding the skill of analyzing the expert participants noted that interpreter students need to develop analytical skills to understand the meaning of the communication and cultural interaction. They need to learn to think about two different cultures each time they work, how they interact, and how they are the same and different from each other. This includes many aspects of deep cultural knowledge. Interpreter students need to know about explicit and implicit language, and how to identify and understand it. They need to know interpreter ethics and standards, and be able to rely on them when making judgments while interpreting.

To evaluate the student participants' understanding and ability to use the skill to analyze, they analyzed a photograph during the focus group. In the data there is proof that the student participants understood the concept of the skill to analyze, and they demonstrated this skill by using picture clues to interpret what was happening, and to predict what might have happened before the picture of Mr. Obama in his office. They also demonstrated their ability to analyze by voicing multiple perspectives, intergrading and connecting ideas, and offering solutions that were consistent with the evidence in the photograph. While the data is unable to indicate any type of developmental levels, it does point out that the student participants are familiar and aware of the assessed concepts associated with the skill to analyze.

The second major finding is that the expert participants consider intercultural competence development to be a complex and life long individual journey for

interpreters. Each interpreting student brings a variety of background experiences to build their training upon. Interpreter trainers need to be aware of this and meet each student at their own stage of development with instruction that will give opportunities to further develop their skills. In addition, interpreters need to be mindful that intercultural competence development is an individual lifelong process. According to the expert interpreter participants, student interpreters need to develop the knowledge and comprehension elements and the skills elements of the Deardorff Pyramid Model of Intercultural Competence (2006) to be successful in training and on the job. Lastly, it is important for interpreting students to develop self-evaluation skills to be able monitor their own intercultural competence development.

I began this study with the intention to collect data from the experts I interviewed in the interpreter field that would indicate the intercultural competence developmental level of skills needed by interpreter students to be successful in the 40-hour training course. My hope was to use my adaption of Kantan's (2004) description of the developmental levels of intercultural interpreter beliefs, strategies, and behaviors to answer this question. According to Kantan (2004), in this framework are the idealized stages an interpreter passes through to obtain intercultural competence in his or her growth from student to professional interpreter or translator. The interpreting experts I interviewed explained that it was not practical for them to think about interpreter students entering training programs in developmental stages because it is difficult to know what stage any given student might be at; student interpreters enter training with vast differences in life experiences.

However, I still felt as a novice ESP course designer and adult ESL teacher that Kantan Interpreter Developmental Stages could help me help understand and benchmark the stages of the intercultural developmental process with my students as well as providing a guide for continued development. Also, I sensed this information this could be helpful in the ESP course design of an interpreter preparatory course. To get an idea of where the eight student participants in the focus group might place as a whole-group on the Kantan Interpreter Developmental Stages, I wrote questions and prompts to elicit data during the focus group to answer this question. According to the data, I determined that the student participants from the focus group seemed to be at the end of level one and the beginning to middle of level two in Kantan Interpreter Developmental Stages. This is a general conclusion that I will find helpful when designing the interpreter preparatory course.

According to Dudley-Evans and St. John (1998), needs analysis is the foundation of an ESP course design and leads to a very focused course. Hutchinson and Waters (2000) created a framework where they claim most of the types of needs in ESP analysis can be sorted out. There are target needs, specifically what the learner needs to be able to do at the end of the course. I had hoped that the study's interviews with the interpreter experts would provide this specific information. Another need called lacks is what existing gaps need to be closed from the teaching perspective, and the teacher determines them. This information is collected from finding out what the learners already know and comparing it to the target necessities to find the gap, what the learner lacks. A goal of my study was to determine the lacks so I could create a very focused course. With this study I

was unable to determine the specific target needs of interpreter students entering training or the specific lacks for the ESP course I plan to design, since these vary for each individual student. I was however able to collect general target needs and general lacks information that will be useful when designing the interpreter preparatory course for community interpreters.

I will use the findings from this research to develop goals and objectives for an ESP course focused on preparing adult ELs to succeed in a 40-hour community interpreter training course. Particular goals and objectives will be focused on the students developing the skills of to listen and to analyze, and to increase their knowledge base of deep culture elements. Also, the students will to be given opportunities in the preparatory course to further learn about intercultural interpreter beliefs, strategies and behaviors and be provided with chances to develop these competencies. The research has given me the opportunity to design a more focused course that will better meet the students' needs.

Limitations

While this study produced rich informative data, the study also had limitations. The study had a small scope because I interviewed only three interpreting experts. Interviewing more experts with varying experience in the field of community interpreting would give a wider range of data to draw upon. Also, I only focused specifically on the skill-elements of intercultural competence on the Deardorff Pyramid of Intercultural Competence. It would be useful to know more specifically the students' surface and deep cultural knowledge, their understanding of the communication styles of high and low context cultures, the concept of time, and turn-taking as well as the use of silence.

Further Research

Several questions came to mind throughout the span of this research. What is the theory surrounding the construct of cultural humility? How much do potential adult EL interpreter students know about deep culture? Has the Kantan model been used to assess the development levels of adult ELs? Which are the interpreter ethics and standards that are the most challenging for adult ELs to comprehend? If I could extend this study, I would like to interview more experts in the field of interpreter training as well as individual interpreters. I am interested in further investigating the various manners in which culture influences specific aspects of an interpreter's work such as cultural mediation. Lastly, I am interested in investigating literature that focuses on adult ELs and the use of focus groups in the classroom.

The intention of this study was to investigate the intercultural competency skills students would need to develop during the 40-hour community interpreter training course. This research project answered that question. The findings will help me design an ESP course focused on preparing adult ELs to succeed in a 40-hour community interpreter training course.

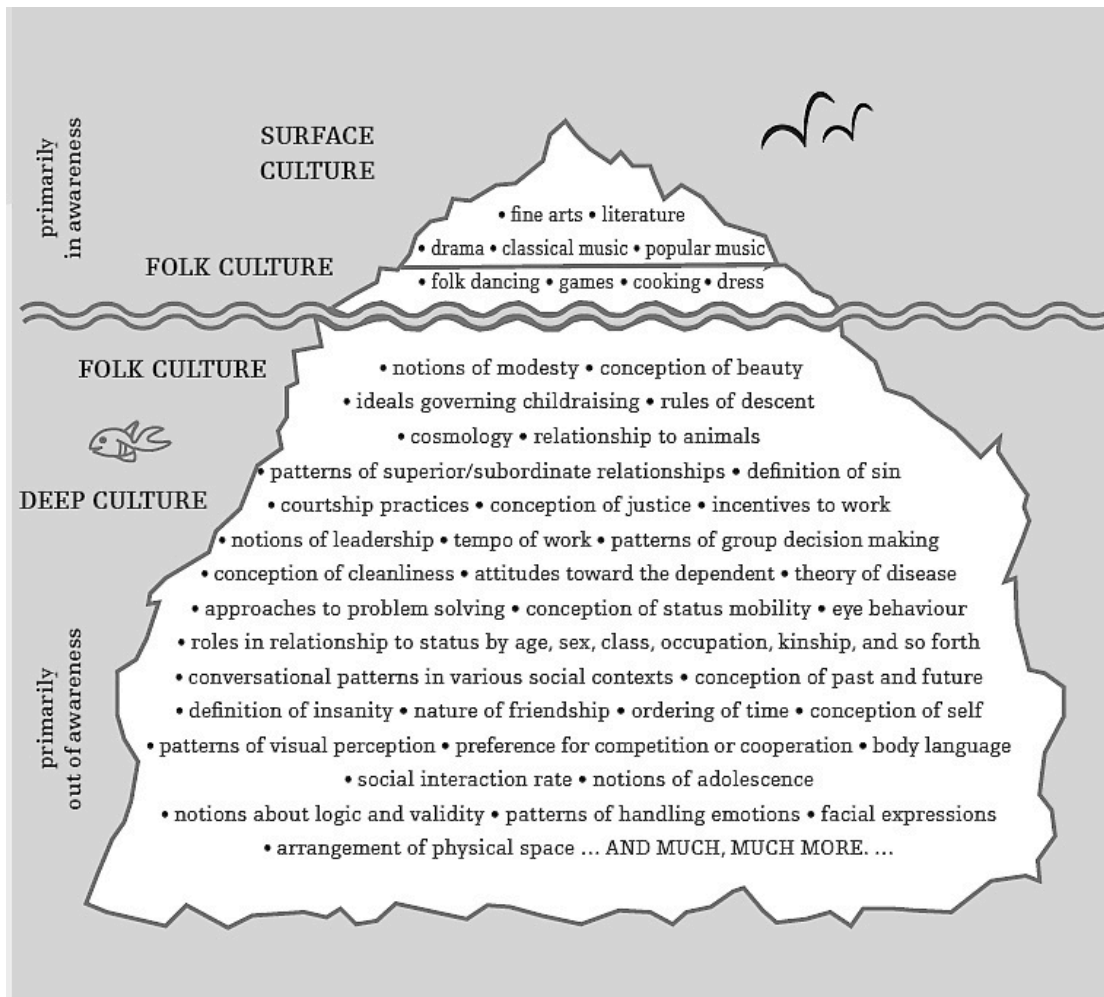
Reflections

I entered this study with a single perspective of intercultural competence development, that being the construct of the framework of intercultural competence. I was enlightened to be introduced to a second perspective or construct named cultural humility. According to one of the interpreter experts interviewed in this study, cultural humility is a better way to approach cultural development versus the construct of

intercultural competence models. It means that interpreters understand cultural competency as a process rather than an end product, and when they enter relationships with cultural humility, they acknowledge that they are always in the process of learning and growing.

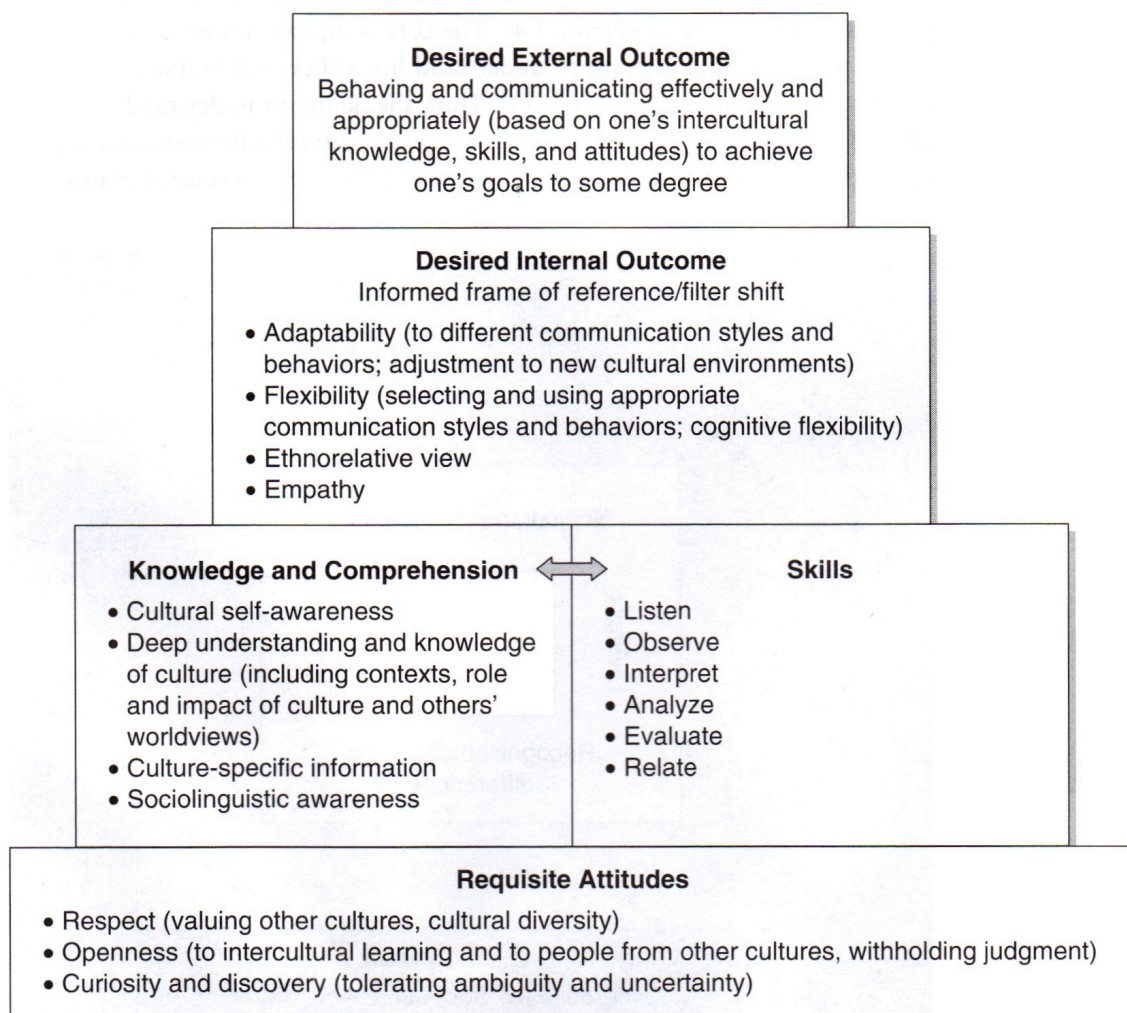
Being a novice researcher and course designer I experienced much success in my investigation, encountering a few limitations, and a few surprises. The end of the project resulted in useful findings and a workable student needs analysis to help me design an adult ELs community interpreter preparatory training course. My experience with this research project has developed and deepened my own teaching practice. As well, this study as opened my mind to new topics of discovery in the field of adult teaching.

APPENDIX A: Cultural Iceberg Model



Cultural Iceberg Model. From “Beyond the Tip of the Iceberg: Five Stages Toward Cultural Competence,” by Hanley, Jerome, (1999). (p. 2).

APPENDIX B: Deardorff Pyramid of Intercultural Competence



From "Identification and assessment of intercultural competence," by D. K. Deardorff, (2006), *Journal of Studies in Intercultural Education*, 10, 241-266.

APPENDIX C: Kantan Interpreter Developmental Stages

Stages	Interpreter Intercultural Competence Beliefs, Strategies and Behaviors
Level 1: Denial and Defense	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Behaves as outsiders. • Expects similarity rather than difference. • May have negative perceptions of some aspect of the environment. • May have negative perceptions of some aspects of behavior. • Has difficulty in dealing with culture shock. • Not yet ready to accept that their models of the world are limited. • Believes that intercultural communication has little to do with interpreting.
Level 2: Minimization to Acceptance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aware that interpreting goes beyond the dictionary. • Knows that interpreting means thinking about insiders and outsiders. • Ready to learn about discourse. • Ready to investigate genre across cultures. • Learns that there is not just one good or normal appropriate style. • Ready to learn about politeness norms across cultures. • Ready to learn from cultural simulations and culture shock exercises. • Is learning that normal behavior is culture bond communication across languages. • Is learning culture means separating perception, interaction and evaluation.
Level 3: Adaptation and Integration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ready to explore underlying values and beliefs that make different communication strategies logical. • Aware of the limits of their own world. • Aware of their own toleration limits. • The word “normal” is now used with caution. • Begins to explore different interpreter beliefs. • Strengthens their own meta-cultural set of meditational convictions. • Will discuss interpretation in terms of utility, relevance, hegemony, and intercultural ethics. • Can realize interpreting as a powerful opportunity in bringing individuals and cultures closer to understanding and respecting each other’s ways. • Can begin using mediating strategies.

Adapted from “Translating Cultures,” by D. Kantan, D., 2004

APPENDIX D: Interview and Focus Group Questions and Activities

Expert Interpreter Participant Interview Questions

First Questions

1. Please talk about the importance of cultural knowledge and intercultural competence in the role of the community interpreter.
2. When teaching the training course, what are the most difficult concepts for students to comprehend?
3. Looking at Kantan's (2004) Interpreter Developmental Stages, at what stages do you typically find new student interpreters when they begin training?
4. Looking at the list of intercultural competency skills, which ones are most important in interpreting? Which ones seem to bring the greatest challenges for students who want to become interpreters?

Second Questions

1. To listen-to give attention with the ear; attend closely for the purpose of hearing and understanding.
 - Please explain a job scenario where interpreters will use intercultural listening skills.
2. To observe-to regard with attention, especially so as to see or learn something; to watch, perceive, or notice.
 - Please explain a job scenario where interpreters will use intercultural observation skills.
3. To interpret-to give or provide the meaning of; explain; explicate; to construe or understand in a particular way.

- Please explain a job scenario where interpreters will use intercultural interpretation skills.
4. To analyze-to examine carefully and in detail so as to identify causes, key factors, possible results; determine the elements or essential features of.
 - Please explain a job scenario where interpreters will use intercultural analysis skills.
 5. To evaluate-to judge or determine the significance, worth, or quality of; assess.
 - Please explain a job scenario where interpreters will use intercultural evaluation skills.
 6. To relate-to establish a social or sympathetic relationship with a person or thing; to bring into or establish association, connection.
 - Please explain a job scenario where interpreters will use intercultural relationship skills.

Focus Group Questions and Activity Material

Discussion Questions

1. What do you think of when you here the word culture?
2. What are some things that are similar in American culture as your culture?
3. What are some things that are different in America than your country?
4. Is the culture from your country more similar or different than American culture?
5. Are schools in all countries basically the same? How about marriage ceremonies?
6. When we listen to people speak, what helps us understand what they are saying?

7. Think about interpreting or translating a few sentences from your language to English, are you able to look up the meaning of all of the words you might not know in English in the dictionary?

- Can you use those words to say the same sentence in English?
- Will the sentences mean the same?
- Why or why not?
- To figure out the meaning of a sentence in English, can you always look words up in the dictionary?

Whole-group Idiom and Expression Rewording Activity

Number	Original Sentence	Reworded Sentence
1	It's raining cats and dogs.	
2	I'm keeping my fingers crossed for a sunny afternoon.	
3	I'm afraid so.	
4	The new car cost me an arm and a leg.	
5	Thanks for getting back to me.	

To Describe-Analyze-Evaluate Activity Questions

Level 1

1. What Happened?
2. What was said?
3. What do you see?

Level 2

1. How do these descriptions or observations fit together?

2. What do you need to know to make sense of the photograph?
3. What would help explain what you see?
4. Why is this happening?

Level 3

1. How do you feel about what you see in the photograph?
2. What positive or negative feelings do you have?
3. What is your opinion of this photograph?

The photograph that was used with the *To Describe-Analyze-Evaluate* student participant activity.



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